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CLUN RURAL DISTRICT

R E P O R T

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

- for -

the Year 1925.

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## REPORT of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1925.

The Annual Report for 1925 is, by direction of the Ministry of Health, to be a Survey Report. A Survey Report is called for at intervals of five years, and differs from the intervening modified Annual Reports in dealing more comprehensively with important changes in the public health services during the period, and generally as to the progress of improvement of the public health.

NATURAL and SOCIAL CONDITIONS of the AREA.

Area (Acres). 82,206.

Population (Census 1921). 6244. Estimated (1925). 6310.

The population declined from 1891 to 1901 by 636 persons, from 1901-11 by 259, and from 1911-21 by 321. The earlier and heavier decrease was probably due to cessation of mining industries in the Shelve area. Since 1921 the population is estimated to have increased slightly.

The Rural District is essentially a hill country, lying in the south-west of the county, and on the borders of Wales. Much of the District lies at an elevation of 1000 feet and upwards, especially in the northern and western parts. The centre and south-eastern parts consist of open valleys, at an elevation above Ordnance Datum of 400 to 600 feet, and broken and divided by small groups of hills. The main structure is that of an old elevated table-land much dissected, weathered down, and glaciated.

The geological formation is much broken, the upper and lower Silurian, and Ordovician measures being exposed in considerable areas, with less extensive exposures of the old Red Sandstone, and of Cambrian and Pre-Cambrian measures. The natural drainage is by various streams rising in the hill country to north and west, and forming the small rivers Onny and Clun, which leave the District through the valleys of the south and east to join the river Teme.

The District contains 16 parishes, and is sparsely populated and agricultural in character, much of the hill country being cultivated or grazed. A small area in the north was in the past worked for lead, barytes, and other minerals, but these industries had much declined and become almost extinct. During the past ten years The Shropshire Mines Limited has taken over most of the old mines and works of the Stiperstones mineral area in this and the adjoining Districts, and much work was done in re-opening mines, and in drainage, and transport arrangements. Mining for barytes is now being carried on to some extent, but production of minerals generally has so far been limited.

The District contains the small market town of Clun in the south, and has several villages of small size which are principally placed in the valleys, and some smaller hamlets, and many isolated farmsteads scattered about the valleys and hillsides. The Borough of Bishop's Castle is within, and near the centre of, the District.

Number of inhabited houses (1921). 1478.

Number of families or separate occupiers (1921). 1495.

Rateable Value. £71,181.

Sum represented by a penny rate. £145.



|         | Total.        | M.  | F. |                       |
|---------|---------------|-----|----|-----------------------|
| Births. | (Legitimate   | 118 | 63 | 55 ) Birth Rate. 19.5 |
|         | (Illegitimate | 5   | 3  | 2 )                   |

Deaths. 69 37 32 Death Rate. 10.9

Number of women dying in consequence of Childbirth:-

From sepsis nil ; from other causes nil.

Deaths of infants under one year per 1,000 births:-

Legitimate 26 : Illegitimate 200; Total 32.

Deaths from Measles (all ages) nil.

" " Whooping Cough (all ages) nil.

" " Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) nil.

#### Clun R.D.      England & Wales.

|                                    |      |      |
|------------------------------------|------|------|
| Birth rate per 1,000 of population | 19.5 | 18.5 |
|------------------------------------|------|------|

|               |      |      |
|---------------|------|------|
| Death " " " " | 10.9 | 12.2 |
|---------------|------|------|

|                                  |     |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Infant death rate per 1,000 born | 32. | 75. |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|

The Birth rate was higher than in 1924.

The Death rate is a very low figure. No death was due to Measles, Scarlet fever, Whooping Cough or Diphtheria. Influenza caused 5 deaths, Pulmonary Tuberculosis 4, other tuberculous disease 2, Cancer 6, Pneumonia 1.

The Infant death rate last year, as also in 1924, was very low.

The following table gives the average rates for the past five years.

#### 1921 - 25.      Clun R.D.      England & Wales.

|                                    |      |      |
|------------------------------------|------|------|
| Birth rate per 1,000 of population | 19.2 | 21.4 |
|------------------------------------|------|------|

|                    |      |      |
|--------------------|------|------|
| Death rate " " " " | 12.4 | 12.2 |
|--------------------|------|------|

|                                  |     |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Infant death rate per 1,000 born | 56. | 77. |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|

The infant death rate is a favourable figure compared with that of the Country generally, and is a good deal lower than for the five preceding years 1916-20, indicating the progress of education in the care of infants and the good results of the Health Visiting work of the County Council.

#### HEALTH SERVICES in the DISTRICT.

Hospitals. Tuberculosis. Shirlett Sanatorium for early cases. Prees Heath Sanatorium for advanced cases. Shropshire Orthopaedic Hospital for surgical cases.

Children. County Council's Babies Home at Wellington.

Smallpox. The County Smallpox Hospitals at Ludlow and Wellington.

The County Council in 1913 after Enquiry issued an Order constituting a Hospital District for the South and South west of the County, including the Clun Rural District. A site was adopted and a Hospital Committee formed, but the War prevented further progress, and a scheme for provision of a Central Isolation Hospital is under consideration by the County Council.



The Council by my advice has arranged with the Shrewsbury & Atcham Joint Isolation Hospital Board for reception of cases into their Hospital. The Council decided that admission should be under the order of the M.O.H. and with the approval of the Chairman of the Council.

There is a Cottage Hospital at Clun.

Ambulance. The County Council's motor ambulance is available for infectious and other cases.

Clinics and Treatment Centres. There is no Child Welfare Centre or School Clinic in the District. The County Dispensaries for Tuberculosis and Venereal Diseases at Shrewsbury are available for the District.

Public Health Officers. The Medical Officer of Health, who is whole time M.O.H. for the South West Salop Combined Districts. The Sanitary Inspector who is also Surveyor and a whole time Officer of the Council. Salary Contributions are received by Exchequer Grant.

Nursing Arrangements. General. By the District nurses of the Shropshire Nursing Federation in parishes where an association has been formed. These include the areas of Clun, Clunbury, Hopesay, Lydbury North and Shelve. The Local Authority is not concerned with the scheme of co-ordination or the financial arrangements.

Infectious disease. The County Council provides for Health Visiting and nursing assistance where necessary, for Measles, Whooping Cough and Pneumonia in the case of children under five years of age, and for cases of Ophthalmia neonatorum.

Midwives. The District Council does not employ or subside midwives. The number practising in the district is 10.

#### ADOPTIVE ACTS, etc., in force.

No Acts or Bye-laws relating to public health have been adopted.

In 1923 the Council adopted the model Regulations as to Dairies & Cowsheds.

#### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES of the AREA.

Water Supply. The District on the whole is well supplied. The villages and main centres are generally supplied from piped schemes, for the most part installed and owned by the Council, as at Clun, Clunton, Clungunford, Clunbury, Brockton, and Newcastle. A public supply was also laid on by the Council during the past five years to Chapel Lawn. These are all gravitation supplies from upland springs and the water is of excellent quality. There are similar supplies, privately owned, laid on to Lydbury North village, and to the hamlets of Acton and Lydbury Down, and to groups of houses at Linley, Norbury, Little Brampton, and to Hopton Castle Village.

The Council's supplies are managed by the Surveyor as Waterworks Engineer who reports that the supply from all may be said to be constant. Some trouble has been experienced at Clunbury but the supply there has now been improved. The estimated number of houses supplied from these waterworks is 350, or some 24 per cent of the total of inhabited houses.

During the past five years the Council has sunk a well and provided a pump at Clunton Coppice for the supply of a group of houses. A small piped supply has been laid on to some six houses at Choulton in Lydbury North parish, by the owner at the representation of the Council. Shortage of water has occurred in dry summers at Whitcott Keysett (Clun parish) and the village of Wentnor. The supply to Whitcott Keysett has been under the Council's consideration for two or three years but difficulties of arrangement for the use of the most suitable spring have prevented progress.



At Aston on Clun Village the supply is from pumps, and water has to be carried a considerable distance to some of the houses. A scheme of supply laid on to this village would be an advantage.

The sinking of a well at the Cabin, Hopesay, for a few houses very badly supplied, has been under consideration.

Stream pollution. No instance has come under notice during the past five years.

Sewerage and Drainage. There is no definite system of sewerage in the District. At Clun, the most populous centre, there are a number of sewers discharging in the river or in various fields at a distance from the houses. During the past year, the Surveyor reports, several of these have been found defective, and to consist in parts of field pipes. These have been replaced by stoneware socket pipes. Lengths of sewer have also been laid at Newcastle and Colebatch in recent years. Drainage from houses in the District generally is disposed of to cesspits or on to fields, or to ditches or streams.

Closet Accommodation. The majority of closets are old privies with underground vaults. The number of W.C's as estimated by the Surveyor is 80, of earth closets 220, and of privies 1090. During the past five years 30 privies have been converted to W.C's. Further progress in the abolition of insanitary privies is desirable. Where sewers are not available for W.C's., the earth, or pail closet, is an efficient and sanitary substitute.

Scavenging. There is no public scavenging, of house refuse or of closets, the great majority of houses having ample space for disposal. The Council now provides a public 'Tip' at Clun, and at Newcastle a quarry is available.

Smoke Abatement. No action taken or necessary, in the absence of factories or workshops emitting smoke.

Schools. No action has been necessary as to insanitary condition and the water supply appears to be satisfactory. The Surveyor reports the Bog School (Wentnor Stiperstones) as defective in structure and dilapidated.

The following is an Account furnished by the Sanitary Inspector, of Sanitary Work for the year.

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of houses which have been inspected during the above period, either in connection with outbreaks of infectious disease, or in consequence of complaints, or in the course of a systematic Sanitary Survey (Including inspections under Housing, Town Planning Act). - | 91 |
| Number of legal notices sent -   | 1  |
| Number of informal notices sent -  | 25 |
| Number of such notices complied with -   | 19 |
| Number of letters written -  | 37 |

PARTICULARS OF SANITARY MATTERS REFERRED TO IN THE ABOVE NOTICES:

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| (a) Houses to be disinfected after Infectious Disease -   | Nil |
| (b) Deficient or objectionable water supply -   | 2   |
| (c) New drains to be constructed or old drains to be amended -                                      | 5   |
| (d) New closets to be provided or old ones to be amended in construction -                          | 3   |
| (e) Houses damp or dirty, or admitting rain, or weather, or otherwise in a bad sanitary condition - | 10  |
| (f) Offensive accumulations of all kinds -  | 1   |
| (g) Animals so kept as to be a nuisance -   | 1   |
| (h) Houses overcrowded -  | 3   |



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|   |   |         |
|---|---|---------|
| Houses disinfected after infectious disease (other than phthisis) |   | 9       |
| Houses disinfected in cases of phthisis                           | - | 4       |
| Privies converted to water closets                                | - | Nil     |
| Privies converted to earth closets                                | - | 3       |
| Plans for new houses passed                                       | - | Nil     |
| Certificates issued for water supply to new houses                | - | Nil     |
| Houses connected to public water supply                           | - | Nil     |
| Repairs to public pumps and wells                                 | - | Nil     |
| New public wells  | - | Nil     |
| Private wells re-constructed or improved                          | - | 1       |
| Houses connected to public sewerage                               | - | 4       |
| Lengths of new sewers laid  | - | 30 yds. |
| Lengths of new water mains laid                                   | - | Nil     |

Proceedings before Magistrates: Nil.

H. A. ELLIOTT,

Inspector of Nuisances.

### HOUSING.

General Housing Conditions. With a population that has for several decades been declining no acute shortage of houses has developed. There is however a demand in some parts for more houses, and their provision would be of great advantage. In 1919 the Council prepared a scheme for 80 houses, to supply actual needs and to provide for some replacement of old and worn out cottages. No building however had taken place when the State aided scheme was terminated. A recent return shows that the total number of new houses privately built from that time up to the end of 1925 is 4. Eight more houses had been decided on, or were in course of construction, by private persons, 6 with subsidy and two without. The position is put in the following note supplied by the Surveyor, Mr. Elliott:-

"During 1925, the Council reconsidered the Housing question in their district. The Sanitary Committee recommended the Council that in their opinion, there is a need for more houses in the district. The Council had a special meeting to consider the question and decided that for the present it was best to make another attempt to get the houses built by private enterprise. In order to encourage this they advertised that they were willing to give Lump Sum Subsidies varying from £100 to £120 according to site and ~~circumstances~~, and subject to the sanction of the Minister of Health. The Minister of Health approved of subsidy on these lines in respect of four houses. Two of these subsidies were approved for two cottages at Broome and building commenced in August, 1925, but were not finished at the end of the year. The other two subsidies had not been granted at the end of the year."

NOTE. Since the end of the year a subsidy of £110 has been approved for a cottage at Lydbury North, and the Council have also decided to grant a subsidy of £71 to a person building a cottage just outside their district at the Riddings, near Newcastle. This was done by the request of the Ministry of Health."

Overcrowding. Overcrowding is not often met with, the instances occurring being generally those of a growing family in a



house of very limited accommodation. During the past five years some fifteen cases have been discovered, and dealt with by the Inspector's notices.

Fitness of Houses. There are many good cottages on the large estates, but in the absence of building there remains a large number of old houses which from decay or faults and deficiencies of construction, or want of space, fall below a satisfactory modern standard of habitation. The cost of repairs work and the un-economic scale of rents stand in the way of much improvement. The re-conditioning of old cottage property, will it may be hoped, be made capable of more rapid progress under the Rural Housing Act now foreshadowed.

Number of new houses erected during the year:-

|   |   |   |   |     |
|---|---|---|---|-----|
| (a) Total.  | - | - | - | Nil |
| (b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts: |   |   |   |     |
| (i) By the Local Authority                        | - | - | - | Nil |
| (ii) By other bodies or persons                   | - | - | - | Nil |

#### 1. Unfit dwelling houses.

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Inspection - (1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)  | 61 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 | 22 |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation  | 1  |
| (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation          | 25 |

#### 2. Remedy of Defects without Service of formal Notices.

|  |   |   |    |
|--|---|---|----|
| Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers. | - | - | 19 |
|--|---|---|----|

#### 3. Action under Statutory Powers.

|  |   |   |     |
|--|---|---|-----|
| A.- Proceedings under section 3 of the Housing Act 1925.   |   |   |     |
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs  | - | - | Nil |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit:-  |   |   | "   |
| (a) by owners  | - | - | "   |
| (b) by Local Authority in default of owners  | - | - | "   |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close | - | - | "   |

#### B.- Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied | - | 1 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied:-   |   |   |
| (a) by owners  | - | 1 |
| (b) by Local Authority in default of owners  | - | " |

#### C.- Proceedings under sections 11, 14, & 15, of the Housing Act, 1925.

|  |   |   |     |
|--|---|---|-----|
| (1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders   | - | - | Nil |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made   | - | - | "   |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit | - | - | "   |
| (4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made  | - | - | "   |
| (5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders   | - | - | "   |



## INSPECTION and SUPERVISION of FOOD.

Inspection of Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops for the Year.

No action has been taken as to tuberculous milk and tuberculous cattle.

No licences have been applied for the sale of milk under Special designations.

No refusals or revocation of registration of retailers have been necessary.

MEAT. (1) Inspection of carcases at time of slaughter takes place at irregular intervals. So far as possible all emergency slaughtered animals are inspected.

(2) There are no arrangements for marking meat.

(3) Stalls, shops, stores, and vehicles are inspected at irregular intervals.

No. of private slaughter houses in use.

|             | <u>In 1920.</u> | <u>In Jan. 1925.</u> | <u>In Dec. 1925.</u> |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Registered, | 3               | 5                    | 5                    |
| Licensed    | -               | -                    | -                    |
| Total       | 3               | 5                    | 5                    |

Other Foods. No action in respect of unsound food has been found necessary.



Bakehouses. There are three in this district and they continue to be kept in good sanitary condition.

Other places where food is prepared. There are no places other than slaughter houses and bakehouses where food is prepared for sale in this district.

#### PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Laboratory Work. The County Council provides for bacteriological examination in cases of Diphtheria, Enteric and Tuberculosis, by arrangement with Birmingham University, free of cost.

Diphtheria Antitoxin is supplied by the District Council, free of cost to cases of the poorer class, through two local chemists who supply medical men upon request. Antitoxin is in general use in all but very slight cases.

In accordance with the recommendations of the Ministry of Health's Memorandum of July 1922, the Council instructed their contracting chemists to hold and supply antitoxin in phials containing 8,000 units for treatment and 500 units for prophylactic use.

During the past five years the number of cases of the principal notifiable diseases was:-

| <u>Disease.</u>         | Total cases<br><u>notified.</u> | Cases admitted<br>to Hospital. | Total<br><u>Deaths.</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Scarlet fever           | .. 41                           | -                              | -                       |
| Diphtheria              | .. 11                           | -                              | -                       |
| Encephalitis Lethargica | 3                               | -                              | 2                       |

The incidence has been light, and the type as regards Scarlet fever and Diphtheria very mild. There was no death from either in the five years. Of the 41 cases of Scarlet fever 13 occurred in 1921 and 16 in 1925. Of the 16 cases last year 14 came to light in October, chiefly in the Clunbury and Clunton areas. They were of extremely slight type for the most part and some were discovered by personal investigation among children reported absent from school. The precautions taken quickly checked the outbreak. Clunbury school was closed for a fortnight and warning leaflets distributed to all families attending.

Encephalitis Lethargica. One case occurred in a child at Brockton (Lydbury North) in 1924 and was fatal. Two cases were notified in 1925 at Rowton (Clungunford Parish). There was no traced, or probable, direct connection. One case was rapidly fatal.



NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

| Disease                               | Total cases notified. | Cases admitted to Hospital. | Total Deaths. |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Small-pox                             | -                     | -                           | -             |
| Scarlet fever                         | 16                    | -                           | -             |
| Diphtheria                            | 2                     | -                           | -             |
| Enteric fever (including Paratyphoid) | -                     | -                           | -             |
| Puerperal fever                       | 1                     | -                           | -             |
| Pneumonia                             | 1                     | -                           | 1             |
| Erysipelas                            | 2                     | -                           | -             |
| Encephalitis Lethargica               | 2                     | -                           | 1             |

Tuberculosis.

| Age-Periods    | New Cases. |    |                |    | Deaths.    |    |                |    |
|----------------|------------|----|----------------|----|------------|----|----------------|----|
|                | Pulmonary. |    | Non-Pulmonary. |    | Pulmonary. |    | Non-Pulmonary. |    |
|                | M.         | F. | M.             | F. | M.         | F. | M.             | F. |
| 0              | -          | -  | -              | 1  | -          | -  | -              | 1  |
| 1              | -          | -  | 1              | 1  | -          | -  | 1              | -  |
| 5              | -          | -  | -              | -  | -          | -  | -              | -  |
| 10             | -          | -  | -              | -  | -          | -  | -              | -  |
| 15             | -          | -  | -              | -  | -          | -  | -              | -  |
| 20             | 1          | -  | -              | -  | -          | -  | -              | -  |
| 25             | -          | 2  | -              | 1  | -          | 1  | -              | -  |
| 35             | 1          | 5  | -              | -  | -          | 2  | -              | -  |
| 45             | 1          | -  | -              | -  | 1          | -  | -              | -  |
| 55             | -          | -  | 1              | -  | -          | -  | -              | -  |
| 65 and upwards | -          | -  | -              | -  | -          | -  | -              | -  |
| Totals -       | 3          | 5  | 2              | 3  | 1          | 3  | 1              | 1  |

| Ophthal-mia Neon-atorum | Cases    |   |          |              | Vision un-im-paired. | Vision im-paired. | Total Blind-ness. | Deaths. |  |  |  |  |
|-------------------------|----------|---|----------|--------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------|--|--|--|--|
|                         | Treated  |   | At home. | In Hospital. |                      |                   |                   |         |  |  |  |  |
|                         | Notified |   |          |              |                      |                   |                   |         |  |  |  |  |
| Nil                     | -        | - | -        | -            | -                    | -                 | -                 | -       |  |  |  |  |

M. GEPP.

Medical Officer of Health.

24th November, 1926.





